

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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BEAUTIFUL THREADS OF GOLD.

Weaving into a workaday life
Beautiful threads of gold!
A thread of joy, with a strand of strife,
And ever the hands which hold
May fashion them into patterns rare,
Or designs of beauty, new and fair,
Till the Master-weaver finds them there,
In beautiful threads of gold.

Weaving them in with a patient hand,
Beautiful threads of gold!
Filling them in as the Master planned
When he laid life's sombre fold.
Weaving them in with homeliest cares,
Over some burden another bears,—
Rejoice that the Master-weaver spares
Some beautiful threads of gold.

Weaving them in with the hopes and fears,
Beautiful threads of gold!
Brighter the gold of the thread appears,
As the web of life grows old.
Weaving them in with a smile and song,
Such wonderful threads, so fine and strong,
Under the good and over the wrong,
Weave beautiful threads of gold.

—*Anna J. Grannis.*

TOLSTOÏ'S THOUGHTS ON LIFE.

Remembering my approaching end, I
feel like telling you that I experience ever
more strongly that which you also know,—

that one should forever transfer more and
more of his aims from the worldly life to
the spiritual life,—to the life which is not
before men, but before God.

One can perfect himself in life only and in
communication with mankind. And if a
man, living amidst other people, makes it
his paramount goal to perfect himself before
God, he will attain in practical affairs
greater results than he who seeks success in
external matters only.

There is but one goal in life; to strive
after the perfection which Christ pointed
out, saying, "Be perfect, even as your
Heavenly Father." This aim of life, the
only one accessible to man, is attained not
by asceticism, but by working out within
one's self a communication of love with
all mankind. From the striving toward
his correctly understood aim emanates all
useful human activities, and in accordance
with this aim all questions are solved.

It is possible to work much and fruit-
fully over the perfection of self under any
circumstances, and this alone is necessary
to us and to him who hath given us life.
Nay, the harder the circumstances under
which we are laboring, the more fruitful
both to us and to others can the internal
work of self-perfection be.

The usual and simple question "whether
I have done everything that he who sent
me hither wished me to do," arises in people
when they are as yet far from death. But
when death is near, there is no longer the
question, there is but the consciousness of
one's approach toward the just, merciful,
and loving God. And in this consciousness,
to me at least, all questions dissolve like
salt in water.

There is spiritual bliss and physical bliss.
We see physical bliss and we judge it,—but
not only do we not see spiritual bliss from
without, often even he who receives it does
not see it. And yet this spiritual bliss is
not only the real bliss, it is incomparably
more precious, more important than any
and every possible physical bliss; and it
satisfies man in his true life,—this, as well as
the eternal life.

One man acquires wealth, fame: another

realizes the vanity of either of these: he learns to despise them and to be happy without them: who is better off?

When we say of any material loss or suffering that it is bad, we simply say that we are blind and do not see the good which is to be found in what we call bad, even as a child does not see any good in medicine given to it, or in being held back from fire.

Losses, woes, sufferings drive us out from the domain of the lowest material life, which is full of difficulties and deprivations, into the domain of spiritual life, which is a joyous and free life. It does not follow from this that one should seek sufferings, but that they, like everything else in the world, are (may become?) bliss unto man.

The entire life of the man awakened to a spiritual life should pass in a struggle between the demands of wisdom—that is, godly demands—and human demands, personal desires. Whether to follow one or the other depends upon the relative power, the clearness of consciousness of the essentiality to follow God's will, and the power of subdual to the judgment of man and personal desires. Only he in whom this struggle is going on can solve it.

The kingdom of heaven is both within us and without us. When we establish it within us it is established in the world. The establishment of the kingdom of heaven within us is necessary to God, to us, and to others.

It is not given unto man to know, for his own good, what sort of life there will be after death, and it is not necessary to know it, for if people knew it, and knew that the life beyond the grave would be worse than this life, they would be more afraid of death than they now are. If they knew that life beyond the grave would be better than this life, they would not concern themselves about this life, and would hasten to die.

So that to know what sort of life there is beyond the grave is not given to us, and is not necessary to us. The entire teaching of Christ is in this,—that man has two lives, a physical life which is destroyed, and a spiritual life which is unchangeable and indestructible. "Before Abraham was, I was," said Christ, and this is referred to us all. So soon as we shall carry over our ego into the spiritual life, and shall live but for spiritual ends, our life can no longer cease, it is a part of God, it always was, is, and will be.

And we must do good not for fear of hell, nor out of hope for paradise, but because,

living a spiritual life, man cannot help desiring anything that is good. And believing in his spirituality, he cannot fear death, destruction.

As for what sort of life that will be, he does not concern himself about it, believing in God the Father, from whom he came and to whom he is going, and with whom he lived, lives now, and will live.—*Extracts from "Private Letters to Friend," in the Independent.*

THE STILL HOUR.

We ourselves shape the joys and fears
Of which the life to come is made,
And fill our future atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.

Whittier.

The great duty of life is not to give pain; and the most acute reasoner cannot find an excuse for one who voluntarily wounds the heart of a fellow-creature. Even for their own sakes, people should show kindness and regard to their dependents. They are often better served in trifles, in proportion as they are rather feared than loved; but how small is this pain compared with the loss sustained in all the weightier affairs of life. Then the faithful servant shows himself at once as a friend, while one who serves from fear shows himself as an enemy.—*Frederika Bremer.*

Without encouragement and faith from without, the stoutest heart will in time grow faint and doubt itself. Then comes the longing and the necessity for the word of praise, the clasp of a kindly hand, and the look that reassures.

Some one must believe in you. And through touching finger tips with this some one we may get in the circuit, and thus reach out to all. Self-reliance is excellent, but as for independence there is no such thing. We are a part of the great Universal Life, and as one must win approval from himself, so he must receive corroboration from others. Having this approval from the elect few, the opinions of the many matter little.

How little we know of the aspirations that wither unexpressed, and of the hopes that perish for the want of the right word spoken at the right time! Out in my orchard, as I write, I see thousands and thousands of beautiful blossoms that will never become fruit for lack of vitalization—they die because they are alone. Thoughts mate-

realize into deeds only where some one vitalizes by approval—every good thing is loved into life.—*Elbert Hubbard, in The Philistine.*

O God, who searchest the heart, thou knowest how weak and frail we are: Oft-times a little adversity troubleth us sore, and maketh us dull and slow to serve thee. When we have purposed to stand strongly, a little trouble hath come, and hath passed not without much sorrow and complaining; and out of a small thing grievous temptation hath arisen. Oh, help us, holy Father, and give us inward strength and spiritual wisdom. We would fix our heart on thee, above all joy and pleasure, above all glory and honor, above all power and riches, above all health and beauty, above all fame and praise, above all earthly gain; for in thee only, O Lord, all treasures of goodness most perfectly do rest, and in thee alone is our true blessedness, and our abiding peace. Amen.
The Christian Register.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 237 Berkeley Street, Boston, Mass.?

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Miscellaneous.

"Flint," A. M. Goodwin; "Uncle Remus"; "At the Cross-roads"; "Our Friend, the Dog," "The Double Garden," Maeterlinck; "Under the Red Robe," Weyman; "The Crime of the Cachelot," Bullen; "Scenes from Clerical Life"; "The Mill on the Floss"; "Daniel Deronda"; "Silas Marner"; "Patience Strong's Outings," A. D. T. Whitney.

Juvenile.

"The Fairy Book"; "Being a Boy"; Grimms's "Fairy Tales"; "Rebecca of Sunny-

brook Farm"; "Child's Book of Nature"; "Concerning Paul and Fiammetta"; "Sermons for Children," Stanley; "Eyebright," Susan Coolidge; "A Borrowed Sister"; "An Only Child"; "A Child's Æsop"; "Half a dozen Housekeepers"; "Nancy Rutledge"; "Tommy the Adventurous"; "Claudine"; "Mary and Florence"; "Jessie Carlton."

The Second Church, Salem, Branch offers the following books. Please address Miss Decker, 4 Mt. Vernon Street, Salem, Mass.: Franklin's "Written Arithmetic"; Eaton's "Mental Arithmetic"; "Manual of Phonography"; "Teacher's Manual of Geography"; "The Normal Music Course"; Parker's "Natural Philosophy"; "The Instructive Reader"; "Independent Reader," Watson; "Child Life in Many Lands," (reader); "Manual of Knitting and Crocheting"; "Footprints of an Itinerant," Maxwell P. Gaddis; "Oratorio of Elijah"; "Oratorio of Eli"; "Progressive French Drill Book"; Grimms's "Fairy Tales"; "Alice in Wonderland."

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. As it has been so long since I have received any reading, I am going to take courage and ask if any one could send me some good novels, or *The Housekeeper*, *Woman's Home Companion*, or *The Ladies' World*, after reading. Any one would be thankfully received. Please do not think me selfish, but I do get so hungry for reading. As my Bible was destroyed by fire, I would like so much to get a large print teachers' Bible. I thank anyone who can remember me with reading. Mrs. M. Q. Worden, 318 Cinnamon Avenue, La Junta, Colorado.

2. Mrs. J. B. Kline, 401 Filmore Street, Topeka, Kansas, would be grateful for a musical journal, or magazine.

3. I have received scarcely any reading for some time, so I write hoping to be remembered again. We now live in a very lonely place, and my health is not good. My home consists of two children of my own, my husband, and one step son. I would be delighted to hear from you sisters. Do write me a letter; and I would be thankful for some good reading, "St. Elmo," or any interesting book or magazine, picture books for the children, and I hope some of you will send Aunt *Permelia Carter* some good reading;

she is eighty-two years old, has been a widow for many years, is poor, and would surely be pleased to receive reading. Her address is *Mesback*, Monroe County, Kentucky. Mrs. Betty Nolen, Dodson, Patrick County, Virginia, R. F. D. No. 1.

4. I have a little girl five years old. As we live three miles from school we could not send her until she is older, but I am beginning now to teach her at home, and as we have had very poor luck in raising crops since we have lived here, money is very scarce with us, and if you could send me a first reader or small arithmetic or any little book that I can teach her from, I would greatly appreciate it. Also, if you could send me some novel or other interesting book occasionally, I would be very grateful for the kindness. I get very little reading matter. Mrs. O. E. Thornburg, Montezuma, Kansas.

5. I am teaching in a country public school, and my husband is the Baptist pastor here. I feel that I can possibly accomplish something for the cause of education, and the cause of Christ, too, in this noble work. Our school does not own a library, and I would be so glad to have books that could be used for reference, and for parallel reading, and books that the children would enjoy. I especially need a good large dictionary for the school room; we haven't one in the whole school. A good atlas is also needed, and reference books of every kind. If the *Cheerful Letter* readers will help me, I shall be profoundly grateful. Mrs. J. W. Reams, Cheriton, Virginia.

6. J. H. Isbell, King's Creek, North Carolina, wishes a copy of Wentworth's "Elementary Algebra."

7. Mrs. R. C. Duval asks that any of the following be sent to Duval Brothers, Richmond College, Richmond, Virginia. Bronson's "English Essays," Masterman's "The Age of Milton," Brooke's "Milton," Verity's "Paradise Lost," Percival's "Samson Agonistes," MacMahon and Snyder's "Differential Calculus," Channing's "Students' History of the United States," Bryce's "American Commonwealth," Hart's "Source Book of American History," Seely's "Expansion of England."

8. Mrs. Anna E. Dillon, 318 West 4th Street, Hastings, Nebraska, asks for "Eight Cousins" or "Alice in Wonderland."

9. Mrs. Roberta K. Washington, Bumpass, Virginia, R. F. D., a public school teacher,

will be glad of any literature or pictures that would help in the school room. She would be especially glad of any New Testament stories.

10. Mrs. W. F. Galloway, Dover, North Carolina, asks for a manual on shorthand.

11. Flora Anglin, Shuff, Virginia, will be glad of any stories.

12. Any book suitable for a Sunday School will be welcomed by Rev. Nathan S. Hill, Orleans, Mass.

The address of Mrs. Clark Woodward is changed from Bancroft, Michigan, to Denton, Wayne County, Michigan, R. F. D. No. 1.

The address of Mrs. Anna M. Hansberry is changed from Ione, Oregon, to Renton, Wash., R. F. D. 2.

The address of Mrs. Hattie D. Wood is changed from Maunville, Indian Territory, to Horne, Texas.

Will some one send to our Secretary the present address of Mrs. H. J. Orr, which has been Custer, South Dakota? A letter thus addressed has been returned, unclaimed.

The friends of Mrs. Margaret Stewart Sibley, will be sorry to hear of her death. A note from her son, Mr. Albert L. Sibley, tells us that she died of heart failure at her home near Branch, Michigan, at the age of seventy.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

HUBERT, ONCE MORE.

While Hubert and Georgie were talking together, a few minutes before the time for beginning their studies arrived, Hubert said to Georgie:—

"When I was coming along the road this morning, that little imp of a Pompling came out and threw stones at me."

"What did you do?" asked Georgie.

"Oh, I chased him into his yard," said Hubert.

"Did he hit you with a stone?" asked Georgie.

"No," replied Hubert, "I would have taken his skin off if he had hit me. But he would not have dared to do such a thing."

"Then," said Juno, "you don't think he really meant to hit you, I suppose."

"No," replied Hubert. "He only did it to make believe. But he is an ugly little fellow."

Juno said no more. If she had thought

that the main thing to be done was to prevent Hubert from speaking in that manner of such a boy as Pompling, she would have reproved him at once for saying what he did; but that was not the main thing. That would be something, it is true. But the main thing was to change his feelings toward the child. She did not at once decide what she could do to make the change in his feelings, but she was satisfied that reproving him for what he said would not be the best way.

So she said nothing at the time, but allowed the subject to drop.

A few days after this Hubert and Georgie asked Juno to go up into their shop to see the bench which they had made. Juno thought that the bench was a very good bench, indeed.

"It proves," said Georgie, "that we know how to use a saw, and so now we are entitled to another tool."

"Yes," said Juno, "you are. And what tool will you have for your next one?"

"What *would* you have?" asked Georgie, turning to Hubert.

"I hardly know yet," said Hubert. "It depends on what we are going to make next."

"I'll tell you an excellent thing to make," said Juno. "I was at Pompling's the other day, and he was drawing his little sister about on a kind of wagon, but one of the wheels was gone. If you could only make him a new wheel, it would please the little fellow very much."

Hubert looked rather serious on hearing this suggestion.

"It is kind in him," continued Juno, "to draw his little sister about, and it would please him so much to have a new wheel."

"I suppose," continued Juno, after a moment's pause, "that he has not any money to pay a carpenter to make him a new wheel. Some of the boys might, perhaps, do it for him if they were good-natured,—but it is not everybody that knows how to do such a thing."

"I'll make him a wheel," said Hubert, suddenly looking up. "At least, I'll try."

"Only," said he, "I must know exactly the *size* of the wheel."

Juno said that she could give him the size of the wheel, for when she saw that one of Pompling's wheels was gone, she hoped to find some way of replacing it, and so she took the measure of the mate of it. She added, moreover, that Hubert did her a great favor by being so willing to undertake the work.

Hubert succeeded very well, on the whole, in making his wheel. The work of burning

out the hole in the centre caused him some trouble, but he at length succeeded in accomplishing it. The boys found an iron rod among the old iron in the barn, which they thought would answer the purpose for a burner very well; and Georgie's idea was that they could heat the iron in the kitchen fire. But Hubert said that this would not do, for the smoke from the burning wood would fill the kitchen and make an unpleasant smell. Accordingly the boys went out to a piece of pasture ground which was not far from the house, at a place where there were plenty of sticks lying around, and there they built a fire in which they could heat their iron and burn out the hole.

By this plan, the boys not only succeeded well in accomplishing their object in respect to the work, but they also amused themselves a great deal in playing about their fire.

Hubert had been intending to leave the wheel with Juno, in order that she might carry it to Pompling. But Juno said that it would be much better for Hubert to take it there himself, on his way home.

"It is you," she said, "that have taken all the trouble to make the wheel, and you must see how pleased Pompling will look when he gets it."

"But suppose when he sees you coming," said Georgie, "and does not know that you are bringing him a wheel, he begins to throw stones at you."

"Then," said Hubert, throwing himself into a threatening attitude, and looking very fierce,—*"I'll shy the wheel at his head."*

"Oh, no!" said Juno. "I would not do that. Walk right on, without paying any attention to his stones, and tell him you have got a wheel for his wagon, and you will see how ashamed he will look when he sees you fitting it on."

Hubert concluded to adopt Juno's proposal, that he should take the wheel himself to Pompling on his way home. When he arrived near the house he saw Pompling on the gate. He was resting his feet on the lower bar, and with his arms folded was leaning upon the upper one. He had been in this position some time—amusing himself in observing the people who passed by.

When he saw Hubert coming he jumped off the gate, and retreated a few steps as if he expected an attack. Hubert held up the wheel and said,—

"See, I've got a wheel for your wagon."

Pompling seemed to be reassured by this announcement, and came forward again. He opened the gate a little way and looked out.

"Oh, yes," said he. "Juno made it for me."

"No," replied Hubert. "Juno could not make such a thing."

"Then she got it made for me," said Pompling.

"No," replied Hubert, "I made it myself. Juno told me about it, but Georgie and I made the wheel for you."

Pompling stared at Hubert and seemed bewildered. He did not appear to know what to make of the affair. In a moment, however, he turned and ran up the path and disappeared round the corner of the house. He very soon returned, pulling his wagon after him—one corner of the board, as usual, dragging on the ground.

Hubert put the wheel upon the axle-tree; and Pompling all the while looked on motionless and speechless. When at length the work was done, and the wagon was ready, and Hubert put the pole, by which it was to be drawn, into his hands and he found on drawing it a little way, that the new wheel would turn and that his wagon was complete, he seemed greatly delighted, and without saying a word, ran off with it and disappeared behind the corner.

Hubert waited a few minutes to see whether he would come back. But he did not come. He had gone into the house to show the mended wagon to his mother, and ask her to get the baby ready to go and take a ride upon it,—and this his mother was doing while Pompling was waiting. He had forgotten all about Hubert, whom he had left in the yard. After waiting a reasonable time Hubert gave up expecting his return, and went home saying as he walked, somewhat disappointed, away, "He does not even thank me."

The next day Juno asked him whether he gave Pompling his wheel. He said he did and that he fitted it on for him.

"And what did he say?" asked Juno.

"He did not say anything," replied Hubert.

"Not anything?" repeated Juno.

"Not a single word," said Hubert. "He ran off as fast as he could go."

"What, without his wagon?" asked Juno.

"Oh, no," replied Hubert. "He took his wagon with him."

Juno laughed.

"He ought at least to have thanked you," said Juno. "But he is such a little fellow we must not expect much from him. Besides we must not do good for the sake of the thanks we get for it,—but for the sake of having the good done. You have made him a wheel, and he will be very happy, no doubt, in drawing his little sister about on his wagon, now that it is all right; and she will

be happy, too, in finding that it goes so much better, and that she does not have to hold on so hard to the board with her little hands; and their mother will be happy to see her children pleased, and to find that now they have got a good wagon; they will play with it more, and she will have more time to do her work. So you see, you have made a great deal of happiness, and that is the main thing. It is of very little consequence whether you get thanks for it or not."

"I think he might, at least, have been civil enough to thank me," said Hubert.

"Certainly," said Juno. "He ought to have done it. But that's the way with doing good. Half the time we don't get any credit for it, and if we do good for the sake of the thanks we are to get, we shall soon grow discouraged and give it up. But if we do good for the sake of the happiness we occasion, then we shall be satisfied without the thanks and go on. You have succeeded in producing a great deal of happiness by making that wheel for Pompling; and if I were you I would go on and make him some washers for his other wheels."

Hubert paused a moment and then said,—

"Well, I will. I don't care about the thanks, after all."

He, however, in the end received the thanks, although he said he did not care about them. For, a few days afterward, he went with the three washers, to complete the set, and put them on the wheels; and then he put the pole into Pompling's hands, in order that he might see how much more smoothly and easily the wheels moved; and Pompling after moving the wagon to and fro a few times to try it, ran off with it around the corner, just as he had done before. Hubert then passed out through the gate and went down the road towards home. He had not gone very far, however, before he heard a voice behind calling out to him,—

"Halloo, you fellow, what made my wheel?"

Hubert turned round, and saw Pompling perched on the gate holding on with his two hands and calling out aloud. "I'm much obliged to you! I thank you. I'm very much obliged to you."

He kept calling out in this way for some time.

When Hubert related this circumstance to Juno, she said it reminded her of one of her favorite texts.

"Be not weary in well doing, for in due season you shall reap if you faint not."—"Hubert," by Jacob Abbott.

NATURAL HISTORY.

MACK, THE PARROT.

VI.

Mack has seen his first baby, and he is mystified, and not quite pleased. I have said that he loves every living thing, but for a while, this baby must be an exception. It was unrolled from a white bundle of wrappings, and began to exercise two very minute hands, and peep out of its two button-holes called eyes. Mack stared and stared; then turned to me and asked, "What's?" which is parrot for "What is it?" He was no wiser after I had told him. I shall await little Lillian's next call with interest.

One of Aunt Lu's music pupils is a prodigy of general aptitude and quickness. As little Margaret finished her lesson and left the house, Aunt Lu exclaimed:

"Isn't that child a character!"

"What, Mack?" asked the parrot.

"No, there are others in the world besides you," was the reply.

Mack shrank into himself, and said, apologetically, "I forgot."

Among Mack's lady friends Mrs. T. of Cambridge is a prime favorite. Whenever she appears, he stands on his beak in the bottom of the cage, making graceful *Salaams* in honor of her coming. She generally pays him much attention, offering him choice bits from the table. On one occasion her stay had to be short, as she wished to reach Cambridge before dark. A hasty luncheon was arranged for her, and when Mack found that she was too busy to notice him, he mounted up on his seed-cup, and shouted "Go it!" in a defiant mood.

Sometimes when visitors arrive, he exclaims: "What's up?"

But very different was the reception accorded Mrs. P., who has a Madonna-like face and head, in addition to a gentle, saint-like manner. Instead of his accustomed "What's up?" he asked demurely, "What has happened?"

In a moment of unwonted frivolity, I sang to him the little street song:

"I love coffee, I love tea;
I love Mack, and he loves me."

What did that bird say? "Poor little Mackie!"

When about to sneeze one day, Mack exclaimed:

"Now I'm going to laugh!"

Mrs. T. was relating, in Mack's presence, the story of an old superstition which ordained that if a hen crowed, she should be

drowned in running water. Mack was greatly excited, exclaiming:—

"I don't want it! I won't hear it!" repeating this several times, with much indignation.

Least I forget it, let me tell of a parrot in Framingham whose cage hung on the piazza of a house which stood on the top of a hill. One day a high wind took the cage from its hook, and over and over it went, down the hill to the bottom. The parrot was unhurt, but in its frightful rolling over and over down the hill, exclaimed continually:—

"Whoa! Whoa!"

As there were five horses on the place, he was doubtless accustomed to this exclamation.—*Helen M. Knowlton.*

DO ANIMALS REASON?

Mr. Burroughs suggests that a bird, if possessed of reasoning faculties, would not peck at a window hoping to get at his reflection inside. While reading this argument of our distinguished naturalist, a song sparrow was vigorously flying against a window just beside my own. He had been at this occupation off and on for several hours. He evidently saw what he supposed to be a rival. I considered that behind me I have a heredity of glass-making and of mirrors, of three or four thousand years. I considered farther that I did not have my sparrow's heredity as a weaver. Consequently the little fellow has done what I cannot do, in my plum tree—woven an exquisite nest, wonderfully adapted to home keeping, without the loss which my house has cost me in the way of heating, lumber, and infection. He will use his house just once, and will build a new one when needed. I considered farther the wonderful reasoning which has gone on to adjust him to the climate. For I find him going South when food is scarce and weather severe. He does not pay Pullman rates for a sleeper, but flies by night when he cannot see his food, and by day enjoys the berries and seeds that he finds in the beautiful valleys and hillsides of Virginia and the Carolinas.

I do not believe that this happy method of living came about by something that careless people call "instinct." There is a good deal of instinct as a result of my reasoning, and there is a good deal as a result of his reasoning. Instinct is not a gift, but a consequence. Two years ago, in Florida, I found the robins by the millions. Their flocks in the bayheads reminded me of the pigeons of my boyhood. One evening, I

think it was the 25th of February, I heard a strange noise overhead, and saw the beginning of the robin flight northward. They went in flocks of five, of ten, and of hundreds. The sky was full of them, and the flight lasted for two or three evenings. It was a matter of close reasoning, for they reached their Northern homes about the 5th of March. Did you ever see the arrival of a big flock of birds? Every year, on the 22d day of April, I watch the arrival of the swifts or chimney swallows. Reaching a certain locality in the night, all the next day is occupied in a voluble discussion, and a gradual elimination of flocks for localities. They go off by groups and families, until the whole great flock is once more located for the summer. When my catbirds, about nine or ten in a number, get here, they divide up my nine acres between them. There is no poaching, but each pair has its own limitations. If I wish to talk with a specially fine singer, I must go over behind my barn and whistle for him. But my dearest friend builds in a syringa bush, almost underneath my balcony. These catbirds all know me, and will set up a joyous song whenever I come into their part of the orchard or gardens. I cannot say just what they are reasoning about on all occasions, but I have a feeling that they are conscious of having found a bird paradise at my expense.

My boy was examining a fly-catcher's nest the other day, and he called out, "Here is the snake skin." This bird, for some reason, I use the word carefully, places a snake skin in its nest. Wilson says, "Snake skins, with this bird, appear to be an indispensable article, for I have never yet found one of his nests without this material forming a part of it." Wilson thinks it may be for the purpose of terrifying other birds and animals. At any rate, it is one of the items which enter into the economy of bird life and bird work, and does not fall within the sure range of man's reason. I do not feel qualified to say that it is a mere matter of unreason. Almost at the same time my attention was called to an excitement in the sky over my head. Looking up, I discovered a crow just rising with a young robin in his mouth. All the robins had joined with the bereaved parents in a shout of anger, and at least a dozen were chasing him with oburgations. They could do very little, with their slow flight and incapacity for rising high. But a little kingbird darted up from near the bee house, and he made it hot for the crow. Now on one side, and now on the other, he pecked at his eyes and pulled at his feathers, till the crow was out of sight.

This, which Kropotkin calls "mutual aid," is a feature of the social side of bird life, which involves quite as much of the co-operative thinking as we human mortals have shown. I notice that in the morning at daybreak, that wonderful orison of the robins, which moves steadily from the Atlantic to the Pacific, a magnificent burst of hallelujah, is joined in by very few other birds. The song sparrow is sometimes heard, but the catbird and the grosbeak and the oriole wait till this great burst of melody is over. Each one has its morning song, but each one has its own thoughts to express.—*E. P. Powell, in the Independent.*

(To be continued.)

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT SHAKESPEARE.

Two companies of players (the Queen's and the Earl of Worcester's) visited the town while the office of High Bailiff was held by John Shakespeare. Both companies, according to a usual custom, were engaged by the Bailiff to play before the Council. Admission to these entertainments was by invitation, and the Queen's Company received nine shillings and the Earl's twelve pence for their pains. Doubtless there were other performances given, to which the public were admitted upon payment; but of these there is no record remaining. It is just possible that John Shakespeare allowed his little son to be present at the play; at least we know that the worthy alderman had a liking for stage plays. These performances were probably given in the "Rood," or Guild Hall, at the southern end of which a platform formerly stood.

At the age of seven, or earlier, in all probability, it is believed, William Shakespeare entered the grammar school of his native town. The schoolmaster at that time was Walter Roche, who was succeeded by Thomas Hunt, and in 1577 by Thomas Jenkins. The salary paid to these masters was double that paid to the master of Eton College.

The town accounts prove that from 1568 to 1595 the school-house, now known as the Pedagogue's House, an ancient building on the south side of the Guild Chapel, underwent considerable repair. There are items of money expended upon "repairing the scole," "dressing and sweeping the scole house," "ground selling the old scole," and "taking down the sollar over the school." Some of these repairs were done when John Shakespeare was Bailiff of Stratford, and it

is evident that he took an interest in the school. Though there is no direct evidence to prove that his son was educated at Stratford Grammar School, there is every probability of the tradition being true. The late Dr. T. S. Baines, in his *Shakespeare Studies*, has devoted an essay to "What Shakespeare learnt at School," wherein he proves that the "little Latin and less Greek" assigned to Shakespeare by Ben Jonson was, in fact, a very fair knowledge of those languages, and in the case of Latin, at least, apt quotations from Virgil and Horace, Terence and Seneca, are more than sufficiently significant. Shakespeare's writings prove that his education was classical, and that his scholastic acquirements, though not those of a university scholar, were of exactly the kind taught at a good grammar school in a country town. The size of the town may be roughly gauged by the return of Henry VIII.'s Commissioners, for there were in Stratford at the time of the Reformation, "1,500 housling people," or communicants, and this signifies from five to seven thousand inhabitants. A tradition of venerable antiquity has been handed down in the school from one generation to another that the desk occupied by Shakespeare stood at the north-west corner of the long room, over the Rood Hall. The desk has now found a resting place in the Museum in Henley Street, but its former position is marked. Walter Roche was about that time master of the school. From Stratford Grammar School Walter Roche removed to the Rectory of Clifford Chambers. Hercules Raynesford was at that time Lord of the Manor; he died in 1583. The rector lived in the picturesque half-timber house still standing on the south side of Clifford Church; a house but little altered since the days of Elizabeth.

The manor house of the Raynesfords stands a bow-shot further to the south, and here Michael Drayton, the kinsman of the Lord of Clifford, was wont to sojourn, as he himself tells in *Polyolbion*, where he apostrophizes "Dear Clifford, the Muses' seat." These scenes and people were familiar to Shakespeare's boyhood. The education he received under Walter Roche must have been admirably adapted to develop the powers of the future poet, while the schoolmaster himself may be the original of one of those amusing pedagogues so accurately portrayed in the Comedies.

Three traditions have descended to us respecting the poet's life immediately succeeding his school days: First, it is said he was apprenticed to a butcher; secondly, he is said to have been a lawyer's clerk; and, thirdly,

to have occupied the position of usher at a country school. The first tradition is scarcely in accordance with the events of his subsequent life, and rests, upon slender evidence, the outcome of a mistake, but, however he may have been occupied, his home would naturally have been with his father in Henley Street, and in that home he would acquire a knowledge of business habits, and also something of the refinements of life. His business knowledge would be gained from his father, the more noble aspirations from his mother, descendant of the Ardens; while his knowledge of books and languages would be increased during the years he assisted the schoolmaster of Stratford, or some other grammar school. Indeed, the probabilities are all in favor of the tradition that Shakespeare was for a time a schoolmaster.—William Stanton, "*Stratford-on-Avon*."

THE HOUSEHOLD.

Anna Maria said the other day, she would like to know if there really was any way of making housekeeping easier, short of shirking it altogether.

Anna Maria is rather a favorite with me, and I wish we could find some way to help her. She doesn't want a hired girl; the last one they had turned up her nose, because the family hadn't a velvet carpet or a silver teaset. When she left, it took Anna Maria and her mother a straight week of house-keeping to get things in order; the closets sweet and the paint bright; and they *never* will get the grease spot out of the wall, where she hung the hams against the wall-paper. Between the two crosses, she would rather endure the work than the help, but need it take *all* one's time just to feed and clean and feed again? That is what she would like to know.

Dear Anna Maria, it need not. There are hosts of helps, nowadays, that do not have unpleasant habits, do not sing "Pinafore" and "The sweet by-and-by" at the tops of their voices; or smell of burnt fat, or wipe the bread knife on their apron. If you spent about a quarter of what a girl's wages would amount to for a year, in these helps, you would find that cooking and cleaning need not take *all* your time. When a carpenter wants to do good work and quick work, he looks out to have the best tools in the best order, and the first thing you want, is to have *your* tools in the best order they will allow.

The greatest help I know of in house-

keeping is a sharp knife. It saves *time* paring vegetables, or cutting meat or bread. So Anna Maria wants to get her father to sharpen the carving knife and the kitchen knife and the little paring knife; and she wants an oil-stone to keep them sharp. A kitchen grindstone which sits on a kitchen table and turns in a japanned iron trough, is a great help, and it only costs a dollar and lasts a generation.

Then, you want a very solid meat-block on three legs, that will stand pounding, hacking, and sawing, on which you can trim your joints of meat, crack bones for soup, chop hash—or no; for that you want a small sausage grinder. No dishes are nicer than those of meat or vegetables, divided very finely, for the flavor spreads, and the fibre cooks better and the food is easier of digestion than in its solid form.

Broad saucepans and frying-pans are best for cooking quickly. To fry potatoes or hominy or cakes for breakfast with a common spider or skillet is miserably slow, compared with the way you can turn them off from the broad griddle, which gives every slice a chance to brown. Use a cake-turner for lifting everything that is fried, if you want to save time, and turn them up in neat whole slices instead of slovenly flakes.

You need not burn your face over the kitchen-stove, if you use a long wooden-handled fork, such as the shops have for ten cents, and a long spoon for cooking.

When you have baking and work over the stove, rubbing the face with sweet oil, glycerine or vaseline, is very good, to prevent that dryness and harshness of the skin which ruins faces early. You need not make your face to shine with it, like a Central African, but rub a little into the skin, after washing it and drying well, and wipe off all that shows on the cheeks.—*Mrs. S. D. Power, in "Anna Maria's Housekeeping!"*

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

JULY 8, 1839.

My dear James,—I suppose it would be as well for this letter to be in the narrative form as I have to relate to you the history of our acquaintance with A. They arrived here last week or rather the week before last, Wednesday night. The next morning, behold a north-east storm with rain and wind and much tumult of the elements, and I waiting all day for it to cease that I might go in the carryall and bring A. home with me. I got quite nervous when night came and I had not yet seen her, and could not sleep,

and by morning was wrought up to a high pitch of nervous excitement, which was only allayed by looking upon her serene countenance, which I did at nine o'clock Saturday morning. I brought her home with me that day and kept her till Monday, and then we went to Boston together. Much shopping occupied the morning, and in the evening we went to a party at Mr. Ripley's, which was pleasant enough. The next day was crowded with engagements, beginning with one at the dentist's at eight o'clock, but we agreed to go to the Allston gallery at seven with Dwight to stay an hour, which we did—and A., the most punctual of her sex, produced her watch at a few minutes before eight and declared she must go; but see how virtue is rewarded! We had not gone many steps before we met Mr. Emerson who was the very person that A. wished most to see. We stopped and I told him who she was, whereupon he escorted us some distance, and seemed much pleased to get a sight of A. Afterwards he called upon them, as he told me, because he wished to see A.; but unluckily she had to run upstairs to dress for an appointment, whereat the reverend Waldo retired in a fit of disappointment, thinking, I suppose, that Mr. H. must be a swallower of Unitarian formulas. Wednesday and Thursday they passed in visiting Cambridge, Mr. Norton, Mr. Ware, etc., Lexington, Dr. Follen, and the fireworks in Boston; which latter exhibition was new to A.

I have just received your letter of June fourth and it seems to me somewhat like treason to write *me* a love letter just at this crisis. Still I think there is no great danger but you will love A. better than all the world besides. A more winning person I have never seen, or one who could more positively steal away the heart. You ask me to tell you frankly what I think of her and there is no temptation to a want of frankness. She seems to me a choice pearl among women—quite free from feminine follies and weakness; and since I say so you may be sure of it, for it offends me in all women and I have never known but two or three who were capable of buying a dress or putting one on without betraying by certain indubitable little signs that vanity was active at the moment, however soon it might subside. But in your A. no such signs appear; the sweetest modesty reigns through all her actions and demeanor. . . . I think you must be very happy—that is inevitable; as far as I can see it appears that A. will be a companion to you in every way that mortal man can wish for a companion. How beautiful she is! . . . I

think her eyes are so sweet and of such a lovely dove-like color and so starry when she looks full at you.

I had a small party and summoned H. D. and Margaret Fuller and Emma Keats to assist at it. They all came; and after all Emma was never introduced to A. It was all my stupidity, but I don't know how it happened. There would not be much range or depth of intercourse among any of the guests on a cloudy afternoon with a fog rising in the distance and every one in a panic lest they should not get home again. Grandmother assured A. that she would never love you half so well as she herself did; and H. D. sent her the same message, and said she should have told her so if she had not looked rather timid.

I like Mr. H. very much indeed, though he would not go to see Allston's pictures because he had seen the "Dead Man Restored," and thought it looked as if he were reviving by the application of burnt feathers instead of a miracle. But A. has gazed at them with devout admiration and seemed to enjoy them in the true way; without exhibiting the enthusiasm of some of our young ladies, she loves to look at them and studies them in an intelligent way, and is sorry to leave them, as I am to leave you in this abrupt fashion, but the paper ends and so must I, only stopping to say that I think mother will be charmed to the extreme degree with A. I am sure she will love her better than she loves me. I hope she will go to Meadville in August.

Yours as ever,

SARAH.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

A CUBE.

1 2

 5 6

 . 3 4

 7 8

From 1 to 2 to set free from restraint.
 From 1 to 3 a building for soldiers.
 From 2 to 4 a small carnivorous quadruped.
 From 3 to 4 a room for cookery.
 From 5 to 6 an abrupt change of mind.
 From 5 to 7 a prisoner.
 From 6 to 8 to bring up (a child).
 From 7 to 8 to clasp in the arms.
 From 1 to 5 a flat round plate.
 From 2 to 6 a contest of speed.
 From 3 to 7 a paper toy.
 From 4 to 8 a title distinguishing any person or thing.

II.

CONUNDRUMS.

16. Why has the shoemaker wonderful powers of endurance?
 17. What small animal is turned into a large one by taking away part of its name?

III.

A LABYRINTH OF LETTERS.

N	Q	U	C	Y	A	D	A	Z	A	R
H	O	I	N	T	H	E	M	S	C	O
S	J	H	B	U	R	R	R	A	H	L
E	Y	A	D	R	O	F	Y	T	A	Y

By beginning at a certain letter and following a path, using no letter twice, three Presidents names may be spelled.

IV.

A DIAMOND PUZZLE.

I
 6 2 7
 I 2 3 4 5
 7 4 8
 5

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, a passage.
 6, 2, 7, a female deer.
 7, 4, 8, to flow back.

Answers to Puzzles in January Number.

I. DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Fill more, Garfield.

II. CONUNDRUMS.—14. When Autumn turns the leaves. 15. U—Because it is always in fun.

III. HEROES AND HEROINES.—1. Coniston. 2. Vanity Fair. 3. Vicar of Wakefield. 4. Old Curiosity Shop. 5. Ivanhoe. 6. Adam Bede.

IV. A SQUARE.

H E R O
 E V E N
 R E E L
 O N L Y

V. CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS.—1. Mary Mapes Dodge. 2. John Hay. 3. Alfred T. Mahan. 4. C. D. Gibson. 5. Jacob Riis.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who received a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe St., Quincy, Mass.

The address of Mrs. Emma M. Backus is changed from Grovetown, Georgia, to College Park, Georgia.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

Headquarters of the Cheerful Letter Exchange are at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, may be found there on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

The February meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be held at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., on Friday, February 7, at 10.30 A.M.

HEREAFTER, ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS, INTENDED FOR THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, "CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, 25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS." THIS INCLUDES SUBSCRIPTIONS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, REQUESTS FOR DISCONTINUANCE, BEGGING LETTERS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OR BRANCHES.

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The Editor asks POSTMASTERS who send notices of changes of address not to send these notices to the Editor, but to the Secretary, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

Hereafter, subscriptions to *The Cheerful Letter* should be sent to the secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Make checks payable to Lily Blunt Porter.

Chairman, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary, Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.